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BENNING'S

1950

Strawberry Book



W. E. BENNING

CLYDE, N. Y.

Phone Clyde 5083

Established 1909 by H. H. Benning

No. 1216

State of New York

Department of Agriculture and Markets

C. Chester DuMond, Commissioner

Certificate of Inspection of Nursery Stock

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the Strawberry Plants of W. E. Benning of Clyde, County of Wayne, State of New York, have been duly examined in compliance with the Agriculture and Markets Law and have been found to be apparently free from all injurious insects, and plant diseases. This certificate is valid until October 1, 1950 unless revoked before that date.

Dated Albany, N. Y., Sept. 12, 1949.

C. CHESTER DUMOND, Commissioner.

A. B. BUCHHOLZ, Director, Bureau Plant Industry.

TO OUR CUSTOMERS

Another year has slipped past and again we extend greetings to our customers and friends. We wish you all a happy and prosperous season ahead. We wish to thank all those who purchased plants from us in 1949. Your purchases totaled the greatest volume of plants we have sold in 40 years in the strawberry plant business.

The 1949 growing season was hot and dry in much of the East. As a result the growth of strawberry beds was quite irregular, ranging from near failures to good stands where conditions were more favorable. Our own acreage was planted early and for the most part came thru in good shape. We have an average supply of most varieties, altho our supply is below last year. Reports would indicate that the overall supply of plants in the East is below normal.

We urge that you place your order early—just as soon as you decide what varieties and how many you want. We will reserve them for you until shipping time.

We take every precaution to keep our plants true to name and they are sold as such. However, should they prove otherwise, we will not be responsible for more than the purchase price of the plants.

Our packing is carefully done to insure arrival of the plants in good condition. However, should you have any complaints to make regarding shortages, poor condition of the plants, etc., they must be made immediately upon arrival of the plants. We will make good anything for which we are at fault. We cannot be responsible for any conditions affecting the plants after their arrival as they are beyond our control.

We start shipping plants in the spring as soon as the weather permits digging. Usually this is about mid-April although in some years we are able to start earlier. We do not like to ship plants after about May 10 due to the danger of failure because of the lateness of the season. Orders received after that date will be filled at the purchaser's risk only. This means that our shipping season is short. Rainy wet weather can easily upset our shipping schedule as we ship only fresh dug plants. We will do our best to get your plants to you at the time you request but please bear in mind the foregoing facts if you do not receive your plants on just the day you want them.

We do not sell plants in the late summer and fall and do not recommend planting at that time.

Many of our customers may wish to drive to our place for their plants. Our place is located on the County highway between Clyde (on N. Y. Route 31) and Seneca Falls (on N. Y. Route 5 and U. S. Route 20) being 4 miles south of Clyde and 10 miles north of Seneca Falls. If you wish to come after your plants we should be notified a couple of days in advance in order that we may have your plants ready.

We are not open for business on Sunday.

Cash must accompany all orders unless other arrangements are made.

CULTURAL PRACTICES

Care of the Plants on Arrival

The package should be opened at once and the roots of each bunch put in water for a few minutes. If necessary to hold the plants for a few days, wet the roots as stated and repack them loosely in the package or put in a pile with the roots inside with damp moss between the layers as in the original package, keeping the plants in a cool place. If it is necessary to hold them more than a few days, heel the plants in the soil. However, immediate planting insures the best results.

Soil

While strawberries are widely grown on many types of soil, individual varieties show a marked difference in their response to varying soil types. Some varieties, such as Premier are universally adapted and will do well on almost any soil. Others are more capricious and will vary from poor to excellent depending on the soil and the locality. Plenty of moisture is essential, especially just before and during picking. Soils rich in humus or organic matter are better adapted to hold sufficient moisture than are poor soils low in humus.

Plant on clean soil, free from weeds and grass. This will aid greatly in weed control.

Planting

Early Spring planting as soon as the ground can be well fitted is best. If delayed until late spring, the chances of heavy loss due to hot dry weather are much greater.

Set in rows $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 feet apart and 15 to 30 inches in the row. At these distances it will require 7,000 to 8,000 plants per acre.

Cultivation

Cultivate frequently enough to keep the soil in good tilth and to control weeds. Weed control is absolutely essential to successful berry growing.

Some of the more free-growing varieties tend to set too many plants for the best results. Recent experiments have shown that allowing only a limited number of strong, sturdy plants to set and removing all excess runners, will result in larger yields with a higher percentage of large, better quality berries.

Blossoms should be removed from the newly set plants as they appear.

Mulching

Late in the fall berries should be mulched to prevent heaving during the winter. Marsh hay, straw, leaves, strawy manure or any like material may be used. In the spring, the bulk of this mulch should be raked off the plants and put between the rows. This will aid in conserving moisture, a most important item in strawberry production, and in weed control. It also keeps the berries cleaner.

PREMIER — The Old Favorite

No berry is so popular and so widely planted in the northern states as Premier. Year after year it retains its popularity as other varieties come and go. Premier is a sure-cropper being very frost resistant. It is the best extra-early berry producing large crops and having a long picking season.

The berries are medium to large in size and bright red in color. Many of the early berries are wedge shaped but the later ones are quite uniformly conic. Though not as firm as Fairfax, they are firm enough to hold up well for shipping. Quality is good.

Premier is a vigorous grower making a good stand of healthy plants. It is widely adapted to a great variety of soil and climatic conditions. It will produce a crop almost anywhere you wish to plant it. Whether you are a commercial grower or a home gardener you cannot go wrong on Premier for your early berries.

For assured profits plant Premier.

FAIRFAX — The Quality Berry

Fairfax is truly a great berry surpassing all others we have grown in quality and firmness. Every year our sales of Fairfax plants have increased. We have increased our plantings yearly and still have not always been able to supply the demand in many seasons. This is the best gauge of the increasing popularity of this grand berry.

With us, Fairfax ripens a few days after Premier. The berries are large to very large and very firm and meaty holding up well for a long time after picking. The berries are bright red when they first ripen but turn dark as they stand either on the plant or in the basket until they become a dark purple. At first this was considered a fault, but, as the public has come to know Fairfax, the dark color has become an asset. It is the trade mark of quality by which consumers can readily identify genuine Fairfax berries and consumers are willing to pay a premium for the grand flavor and quality of Fairfax. Yields are high, at times exceeding Premier with us. The berries are smooth, glossy, beautiful and quite uniformly conic shaped. The plants grow very large with beautiful dark green healthy foliage. Fairfax is not as prolific a plant maker as some varieties but makes a good row. It is more susceptible to frost injury than Premier or Catskill. The fruiting season is exceptionally long.

Plant Fairfax and enjoy the superb quality of nature's finest strawberry. They are so sweet you can eat them without sugar. Once you have tasted them you will understand why we find it hard to restrain our enthusiasm for Fairfax.

CATSKILL — The Best Mid-season Berry

Probably no berry ever forged ahead so rapidly as Catskill after its introduction by the New York State Experiment Station a few years ago. In a very short time it became widely planted and known as the best mid-season berry in the northern states. Like Premier it is widely tolerant of varying soil and climatic conditions. Also, like Premier, it is frost resistant bearing enormous crops of berries every year.

The berries are large to very large, bright red and produced in abundance. They have a characteristically long neck and are often rather rough and irregular in shape. However, this does not seem to detract from their appearance when placed in the basket for sale. The

texture is firm and the quality is good. It has been our experience that in very wet seasons when berries tend to rot badly we seldom find rotten berries among our Catskills. The foliage is dark green and healthy. The plants are vigorous and make a good now.

We find the demand for Catskill increasing yearly. No commercial planting should be without it. Plant Catskill to follow Premier. You will have two sure-croppers and two money makers.

DORSETT — A Berry of Beauty

Dorsett is a high quality berry of great beauty. It is a vigorous growing variety making a heavy row and because of this it responds well to thinning of the plants. The fruit is large and firm ripening just after Premier.

Dorsett is at its best a little farther South and with us its yields are a little disappointing. In those localities where Dorsett is best adapted it is reported to be a very heavy yielder. Dorsett is not as frost resistant or as widely adapted to all kinds of conditions as Premier but it excels Premier in size, quality and appearance.

CULVER — A Berry of Attraction

Culver is a heavy yielding variety producing beautiful bright red berries that are red to the center. The fruit is large, smooth, uniformly cone shaped and attractive. Culver truly has the eye appeal that makes berries sell. It is one of the most attractive berries we have grown. They are slightly tart with excellent flavor and quality. The skin of Culver is tender and they should be handled carefully.

Culver is a good plant maker. The plants are vigorous, dark green and healthy.

ROBINSON — The Best Late Variety

Robinson came to us highly recommended from Michigan where it originated. We can readily see why the Michigan growers are so enthusiastic over it as a commercial variety.

Robinson is a prolific plant maker and a tremendous yielder. We have never seen any variety set more berries and carry them to maturity. The berries are a beautiful light red, conic in shape and often distinctively ribbed. They are very large in size and hold up well during the season.

As compared with the old standard varieties, Robinson will equal or outyield Premier or Catskill, is as large or larger in size than Catskill, is not as high quality as Fairfax or Catskill, being only average in this respect, and will set more plants than Premier.

Robinson is without doubt the best late berry for commercial use we have seen in this area. We urge all commercial growers to try it.

SPARKLE — The Freezing Berry

No strawberry ever came to the top in popularity more quickly than Sparkle. We fruited Sparkle for several years before the New Jersey Experiment Station, where it was developed, officially named it and introduced it to the trade. When it was named, we listed it in our catalog. Sales amounted to about 1% of our total sales. In 1949, five years later, sales of Sparkle were almost one-fourth of all our sales. We sold more plants of Sparkle than any other variety. This indicates the tremendous enthusiasm and interest this new variety has created in the Northern strawberry growing area.

One of the reasons for this great interest in Sparkle is its outstanding freezing qualities. In a freezing test at the New York State Experiment Station involving 300 varieties of strawberries, Sparkle topped them all for quality. Sparkle is being widely planted for both home and commercial freezing.

Sparkle, however, is not just a top freezing berry. It is excellent for fresh use either as a home garden or a commercial berry. The bright red shining berries truly "Sparkle" in the basket and have an irresistible eye appeal to the consumer. In addition to eye appeal, Sparkle has the quality and flavor to bring buyers back for more. The berries are medium to large in size, smooth and uniform. They are firm in texture and hold up well. Yields are high.

Sparkle is as outstanding in its plant characteristics as in its fruit. The plants are vigorous, healthy and prolific. The leaves are a beautiful dark green with no trace of the leaf troubles that afflict many varieties. Visitors to our farm remark on the outstanding vigor and growth of the Sparkle beds. We have grown Sparkle under many unfavorable conditions where other varieties have failed to put out a normal number of plants, but have never yet failed to get a good row. Even in 1947, when our area was plagued with daily rains all spring so that we could not set our plants until June and when we had severe drouth conditions later in the summer, Sparkle came thru with a good stand of plants. All other varieties except Robinson, which was also good, set less than 50% of a stand of plants.

If you are already a Sparkle booster, we need say no more. If not, you will surely want to try Sparkle this year. It is an excellent mid-season to late variety for home or commercial use.

· MIDLAND — A New Heavy Yields

Midland, a new variety from Maryland, impressed us with the size, quantity and beauty of the berries and by their fine distinctive flavor. In our section they were one of the earliest berries to ripen and continued to bear large, firm, bright red berries over a long picking season.

The plants are large and healthy and produced in moderate numbers.

Recommended as an excellent freezing variety.

Make a trial planting of Midland and see its many excellent qualities for yourself.

· FAIRPEAK — A High Quality Late Berry

Fairpeake is a cross between Fairfax and Chesapeake and combines many of the best qualities of both. It is a large handsome firm high quality late berry. It is not a prolific plant maker but is better than Chesapeake in that respect. The plants are robust and healthy.

For the home garden Fairpeake will probably excell Robinson as a late berry because of its top notch quality. In commercial plantings Robinson is probably the better berry because of its tremendous yields.

· RED STAR — The Latest of All

Red Star was developed by the U. S. D. A. recently and has been advertised as the best late variety. The plants are very large but make only a moderate number of new plants. Red Star sets such a very heavy crop of berries that it needs a plentiful supply of moisture to mature them to good size. The berries are very large but with us they tend to grow small and somewhat knotty if conditions become hot and dry. Red Star is bright red, firm and somewhat rough and irregular in shape. Quality is good. We recommend that you give Red Star a trial.

THE STRAWBERRY HIT PARADE

(as judged by our 1949 sales of plants)

NO. 1 SPARKLE

Best seller of 1949. Vigorous. Highly productive. Beautiful berries that "Sparkle". Top quality. The freezing berry par excellence.

NO. 2 FAIRFAX

One of the top berries for years. Unsurpassed quality. Large firm berries. Dark red. Sweet. No better eating berries grown.

NO. 3 PREMIER

For 30 years the most popular commercial berry in the North. Dependable. Productive. Frost resistant. Widely adapted. Profitable.

NO. 4 CATSKILL

The leading mid-season berry for the past decade and a half. Large. Firm. Bright red. Hardy. A heavy yielder and a profit maker.

THE NO. 1 EVERBEARER — GEM

The most productive everbearer. Large, smooth berries. Bright red. Good quality and flavor. A good plant maker. Excellent for home or commercial plantings.

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for HEALTH

for PLEASURE

for PROFIT

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ANSWER

TEMPLE — A Berry Made to Order

We planted the Temple for the first time last spring and have not yet fruited it. However, growers in our area have given us favorable reports on it.

Temple was developed as a cross between Fairfax and Aberdeen in the search for a new variety which would not be subject to the red stele disease and yet would have the high quality, large yields, and good shipping qualities needed for a first class market berry. Such a berry was badly needed in many areas where red stele had made the growing of old standard varieties unprofitable. Those who have fruited the new Temple claim that it fills the bill.

The berries are reported to be large, conic, smooth and attractive. Quality is very good. The berries are firm enough for long distance shipping. Temple ripens early and is productive. Reports indicate that it is frost resistant. It probably does best on moist fertile soils.

From our experience in one growing season and from growers reports, we would classify Temple as a vigorous prolific plant maker with unusually tall luxuriant foliage which is resistant to leaf troubles. Our beds of Temple, like our beds of Sparkle, stand out because of their beautiful, clean, dark green leaves. Give Temple a trial.

EVERBEARERS

Berries three months after planting! That's what you get with Everbearers. Plants set this spring will bear in August and on until winter. The blossoms should be cut from plants set this spring until about mid-July in order to give the plants a good chance to get a vigorous start. Then leave the blossoms on and begin enjoying luscious berries in mid-August.

GEM — A Money Maker

One of the most profitable and productive of all the everbearers. Many everbearers have come and gone but Gem retains its popularity because it has what it takes. It is an everbearer that really produces. Throughout late summer and fall you can pick quantities of these beautifully bright and attractive berries. They are somewhat tart but very good in flavor and quality and possess a real strawberry aroma. The berries are round, smooth, good sized and very attractive in the quart.

The plants of Gem are rather small. Nevertheless, they are vigorous growers making many plants which will fruit the same season as they are produced.

MASTODON — The Grand Old Everbearer

This grand old variety has run the gauntlet of the years and still remains one of the most popular everbearers grown. The berries are large, bright red and good quality. Mastodon bears good crops both in the spring and the fall.

The plants of Mastodon are large and vigorous being exceptionally well rooted. It is not as prolific a plant maker as Gem making only a moderate number of plants. For this reason it should be planted closer than most varieties.

Try Mastodon and you will see why it has been a long time favorite.

STREAMLINER

Of the several newer varieties of everbearers we have tried Streamliner has been one of the best with us. The berries are large to very large probably averaging larger than any other everbearer we have grown. They are smooth, glossy and round with a beautiful bright red color. They are very sweet.

Streamliner is an excellent home use variety but probably does not produce heavily enough for commercial use.

BRUNES MARVEL — The Quality Everbearer

Brunes Marvel is one of the best flavored of the everbearers reminding us of the old Progressive. It is a moderate yielder. The berries are medium in size, deep red, somewhat elongated and wonderful to eat. We find that Brunes Marvel produces an excellent crop in June as well as in the fall.

The plants are medium sized with dark green foliage and produced in good numbers.

For tasty berries next fall plant Brunes Marvel.

PRICES

Prepaid		Transportation charges paid by purchaser						
No. of Plants	100	100	200	300	400	500	1000	5000
EARLY								
Premier	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	75.00
Fairfax	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	75.00
Dorsett	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	75.00
Midland	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	75.00
Temple	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	
MID-SEASON								
Catskill	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	75.00
Culver	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	75.00
Sparkle	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	75.00
LATE								
Red Star	3.25	3.00	5.00					
Robinson	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	75.00
Fairpeake	3.25	3.00	5.00	7.00	8.50	10.00	16.00	
EVERBEARERS								
Gem	5.25	5.00	8.00	11.00	13.00	15.00	25.00	100.00
Mastodon	5.25	5.00	8.00	11.00	13.00	15.00	25.00	
Streamliner	5.25	5.00	8.00	11.00	13.00	15.00	25.00	
Brunes Mar'l	5.25	5.00	8.00	11.00	13.00	15.00	25.00	

Plants shipped prepaid through the fourth postal zone only.

Do not add together two or more varieties to obtain a cheaper rate—Each variety must be figured separately.

Stamps (1, 2, and 3 cent) accepted for amounts less than \$1.00.

Prices subject to change without notice.

All plants offered subject to prior sale.

CASH MUST ACCOMPANY ALL ORDERS UNLESS OTHER ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE

References: Postmaster, or Briggs Bank, Clyde, N. Y.